



Washington State Department of Agriculture *Hearing Notice*

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Produce industry to attain lower inspection fee if CAIP proposal enacted

OLYMPIA — Reduced rates are proposed for produce packers that use their own employees trained by the state Department of Agriculture to inspect and grade produce such as potatoes. Comments on the proposal for the newly created Customer Assisted Inspection Program (CAIP) will be taken at a hearing at 10 a.m. Aug. 21 at the Shilo Inn, 1819 Kittleson Rd., Moses Lake. Traditional federal-state inspection services will still be available.

The proposal would establish a fee schedule for CAIP. It adds a section to administrative regulations covering fruit and vegetable inspection fees set by the state Department of Agriculture.

"Industry inspections for checking defects, bruises, shape and other quality factors are being performed under close oversight from our agency," said Jim Quigley, program manager for the Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program.

Inspection fees will be 75 percent of the current 6 cents per hundred-weight fee, or 4 1/2 cents per hundred-weight, Quigley noted.

Members of the Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program and several potato packing firms have been involved in a pilot program since May of last year. The new program uses industry representatives in the inspection process to reduce inspection fees and maintain high quality inspections. Other commodities such as apples could be added to the schedule in the future.

For a copy of the proposed rules or to submit written comments, contact Jim Quigley, program manager, Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program, Commodity Inspection Division, Washington State Department of Agriculture, PO Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504-2560, or FAX to (360) 902-2085. Deadline for comments is Aug. 24. Anticipated date of rule adoption is Aug. 30.

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